57. (New) A method according to claim 54, wherein said acoustic characteristic comprises polarization properties.

58. (New) A method according to claim 54, wherein said acoustic characteristics are determined for a plurality

REMARKS

The present application is a U.S. national application of PCT Application No. PCT/IL99/00561 filed October 24, 1999. The claims in the present application were amended to put them in better form for examination in the US. Added claims 31-58 were previously filed in the international stage.

Applicants wish to bring to the attention of the Examiner that the amended claims in the present application are based on those attached to the International Preliminary Examination Report dated January 30, 2001 issued by the European Patent Office (acting as IPEA). Applicants note that the claims were indicated as meeting the criteria of PCT Article 33(2)-33(4) in the IPER.

Attached is the marked-up set of amended claims 7-12, 14-22, 26-30.

An examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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7.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-6~~, wherein said acoustic characteristic comprises acoustic velocity.

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-7~~, wherein said acoustic characteristic comprises acoustic attenuation.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-8~~, wherein said acoustic characteristic comprises polarization properties.

10.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-6~~, wherein said at least one acoustic characteristic is determined for a plurality of wavelengths, to estimate a frequency dependent variation thereof.

11.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-10~~, wherein the joint is articulated.

12.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-10~~, wherein said first and second bones are interconnected by at least a third bone and wherein said at least one joint comprises at least one joint interconnecting said first bone and said at least third bone and at least a second joint interconnecting said at least third and said second bones.

14.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels between an elbow and a finger.

15.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels between an elbow and a knuckle.

16.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels between a knee and an ankle.

17.(Amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels between a trochanter and a pelvis.

18.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels between two hips.

19.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels along a rib.

20.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said wave travels along a portion of a skull.

21.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-13~~, wherein said bones comprise spinal vertebra.

22.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-21~~, wherein receiving the acoustic wave comprises receiving at least a second acoustic wave, which second wave has a path including at least one shared path portion in bone with said first wave.

26.(Amended) A method according to claim 22~~any of claims 22-25~~, wherein said travel time comprises a relative travel time of said two waves.

27.(Amended) A method according to claim 22~~any of claims 22-26~~, wherein said two waves are generated simultaneously.

28.(Amended) A method according to claim 22~~any of claims 22-26~~, wherein said two waves are generated as a single source wave.

29.(Amended) A method according to claim 22~~any of claims 22-26~~, wherein said two waves are generated at a time delayed relative to each other.

30.(Amended) A method according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-29~~, comprising repeating said transmitting and said receiving for at least a second acoustic wave, traveling in a direction opposite a traveling direction of said wave, to determine local acoustic bone characteristics at an area which is traversed by both of said waves.